

EVAN6221 CHURCH REVITALIZATION
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to give the student a general idea of the content, format, and textbooks used for this class. The professor will submit a full syllabus at the beginning of the class which will contain a course schedule and the instructor's information.

Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Core Value Focus

The seminary's core values are: (1) doctrinal integrity, (2) spiritual vitality, (3) mission focus, (4) characteristic excellence, and (5) servant leadership.

I. Course Description

The purpose of this course is to help students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to lead plateaued and declining churches in a variety of settings to become revitalized. This course provides students with the conceptual tools necessary to understand and work effectively in revitalizing churches by using a case study approach.

II. Course Objectives

1. Students will learn and understand the process of church revitalization.
2. Students will study the importance of context to the revitalization process.
3. Students will become familiar with significant literature on church revitalization.

III. Course Methodology

Cases will be presented that involve the revitalization of small, medium, and large churches; churches in rural, small town, medium-sized cities, and metropolitan areas; churches with white, black, Hispanic, and Asian congregations; churches that have declined because of various problems; and churches that have not baptized anyone in years. Students will enhance their skills in leading church revitalization through three closely related ways:

1. Analyzing and developing solutions to the different problems churches confront that hinder the revitalization process.
2. Constructing "principles for church revitalization" through case study discussions of revitalized churches in a variety of contexts.
3. Developing conceptual tools and frameworks that help make sense of the subject of church revitalization.

In addition to internet case/class interactions, students will have discussions with church leaders who have led their churches to become revitalized. This exposure to and interaction with these real-world practitioners will help "bring to life" some of the issues discussed in the readings/cases.

IV. Required Reading

Each student will read the required textbooks:

Stetzer, Ed, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can, Too*. B&H, 2007; Rainer, Thom and Ed Stetzer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations*. B&H, 2010; McIntosh, Gary, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*. Baker Books, 2009; Wright, Todd and Marty Duren. *Journeys: Transitioning Churches to Relevance*. Missional Press, 2008.

V. Grading

The requirements for the course and the contribution of each towards the final grade are as follows:

ACTIVITIES PERCENTAGES

Church Case Report 50%

Book Reports 25%

Class Interaction 25%

VI. Course Requirements

Individual Case Reports:

A major part of this course involves student reporting the revitalization of an assigned church. During the first week of class, the church will be assigned by the professor in consultation with the student. During the first week, demographic information and an internal growth analysis of each church will be provided to the student. The church will preferably be located near where the student lives so that he/she will be able to make on-site visits. Each student will interview church leaders and if possible take digital pictures that can be used to develop a PowerPoint presentation along with a report in Word or WordPerfect format. Both the PowerPoint and report file will be emailed to the professor so that they can be posted on Blackboard for class discussion. The report is due on Monday of the week designated for discussion.

The case report should be at least 12-15 double-spaced pages. It is intended to be an analytic report of issues central to each church. Students will be expected to comment on the church reports on Blackboard's Threaded Discussion section.

NOTE: This is an internet course. While most students will be located in the United States, some students will be located outside the country. The professor has an extensive database of churches throughout the nation and should be able to assign churches near to where the student lives as long as the student is located within the United States. However, for students located outside the United States, the professor may assign alternative projects. In consultation with the student located outside the country, the professor will make alternative assignments during the first week of class.

Book Reports:

Students will submit four book reports. Each review should contain a brief summary of the book. Most of the report should be an evaluation of the book in which the book's strengths and weaknesses are noted. The report should be emailed to the professor on Monday of the week the class is scheduled discuss the book. The report should be at least five double-spaced pages. The

four textbooks also will be evaluated by the class using Blackboard's Discussion Board.

Class Participation:

Active participation through class discussion on Blackboard is integral to the design of this course. **Class participation counts for 25% of your final grade.** Comments related to lectures and materials posted on Blackboard, presentation of a student's cases, discussion of other student's cases, and response to the assigned readings are essential to class performance. Each student is expected to participate at least three times weekly in the threaded discussions on Blackboard.

Netiquette Statement on Appropriate Online Behavior

Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on the Discussion Board. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity will be expected at all times in the online environment.

VII. Class Schedule

See the initial class schedule form. After the total class enrollment is determined, the initial course schedule may be modified.

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